

includes living up to the pledge I mentioned earlier, that I am making by wearing that white ribbon: I will not commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women, men, or children. And I commend the other Members of this body for the white ribbons that they courageously wore to, again, raise the awareness of domestic violence and sexual assaults.

We have a serious problem in front of us, Mr. Speaker, in every community in America, but I have hope. America is an amazing country, and I am so privileged to be an American, to be free. I believe that the greatness of this country is a reflection of both the greatness of our founding and the greatness of our people. We are up to and equal to the task of fighting domestic violence and sexual assault if we put our American minds and our American spirits to it.

So, today, as I stand before you, Mr. Speaker, again, to call attention to the scourge of domestic violence and sexual abuse, it's, at the same time, celebrating the wonderful agencies and shelters and volunteers and people who have stepped forth who are willing to take this issue on, who are willing to address it, who are willing to help the victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. We are blessed by their service, by their commitment to society, by their appreciation of the value of human life and their desire to help those who need that help.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the House for the ability to be able to call attention to these issues.

At this time, I want to say to Vera House in Syracuse, as well as all of the shelters and all of the agencies throughout this country, thank you for your service. Thank you for what you do for the victims of domestic violence and sexual assaults.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is prepared to recognize a minor Member at this time.

KEEPING THE GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to address you here on the floor of the House of Representatives and to once again bring a case before you that I believe will be overheard in an effective way by the American people and responded to you by, of course, your good judicial and prudential judgment.

I came here to the floor to talk about a number of things. I should always bring up the number one thing that is on my mind first. And I know that it's impossible for me to exhaust the subject, but I have given it a significant

endeavor over the last year and a half. And now, as things move towards a head, with the continuing resolution negotiations and debate that is taking place and the major decisions that will be formed over the weekend by the leadership in the House and in the Senate in consultation, presumably, with the White House, we expect to see some kind of a proposal come before one or both Chambers next week before the clock ticks down on the continuing resolution that is temporarily funding this government in a piece of shell appropriations that should have never have happened. But that's a subject matter perhaps outside of what I should bring up today, and we should focus on the issues at hand, and they are this:

There was a strong pledge that was made that if Republicans win the majority, Mr. Speaker, that we would cut \$100 billion out of this fiscal year's budget. I will submit that, recognizing that we were 5 months into this fiscal year before we had an opportunity to begin that process, that calculates out to be about \$61.5 billion if you annualized \$100 billion. Even though the initially proposed continuing resolution did not include those kinds of cuts, there was an intense debate here in this Congress driven by the 87 freshmen Republicans to get that number up to a number that was either \$100 billion or \$100 billion if you calculated it on an annualized basis.

We did come together on that number, and this House did pass H.R. 1, which included in it \$61.5 billion worth of cuts out of fiscal year 2011, even though, let me say, the function of the House was not functional during the last 2 or 3 years at least of Speaker PELOSI's time, and there was no appropriations process that one could bring forward, and there was no budget that was brought forward and, therefore, government was being run on stopgap measures of continuing resolutions.

During the lame duck session—the lame duck session being the period of time when Congress comes together to meet after an election. I have said that lame duck sessions should only be to take care of the urgent issues that need to be handled before the new Members of Congress can be sworn in. The old Congress, at least in theory, is delegitimized by the elections that take place. Last year, it was on November 2. They no longer represent the will of the American people. That has been reflected in the election results all across the land. And this House was designed to be a quick reaction strike force to be responsive to the American people.

So our Founding Fathers put it within the Constitution, never amended out, that House Members are up for election every 2 years. And every 10 years there will be a census, and that census is designed then to be used to redistrict the districts. And we have now agreed that 435 is the maximum number of House Members. And as the

population moves and as the population grows, every 10 years, we reset the congressional districts to as accurately as possible reflect the new population distribution in America. That goes on, along with every 2 years, there is an election.

So the elections have two purposes. Every 10 years, it is to reflect the population change; and every 2 years, including that 10-year census year election, which comes up in 2012, it's the quick reaction response to the will of the American people. Because our Founding Fathers understood that, if you put people in this office and let them have tenure for life like we are hearing about in States like Wisconsin or Ohio what tenure does to a person's due diligence, then there would be people that would sit here forever and never be responsible to the American people.

□ 1540

They recognize if they would set the Senate up in 6-year election cycles that the Senate wouldn't be accountable within a short period of time, not within 2 years or 4 years, but in 6 years. That was intentionally so the Senators would be more inclined to make long-term visionary decisions, and House Members could come in as the shock troops, so to speak, to bring the quick reaction if the Congress got out of sync with the people.

Well, it's pretty clear, Mr. Speaker, that the Congress got out of sync with the people last year. Actually, they began to get out of sync with the people well before that, more than 4 years ago.

But when President Obama came in he had huge majorities to work with in the House under NANCY PELOSI as Speaker and in the Senate with HARRY REID as leader, even to the extent that they had a massive majority in the House of Representatives, and they had a filibuster-proof majority in the United States Senate. And so they felt their oats, so to speak.

And their ideology, drove them, I think, to—maybe they didn't know it. I think some of them knew it, and I believe the Blue Dogs that were in this House of Representatives that lost their elections last November knew it. They knew they were walking the plank. They knew they were going down into political Davy Jones' locker if they voted for ObamaCare. But they did, because of leverage, because of legislative shenanigans, because—and I'll say it, Mr. Speaker, that to understand this, that ObamaCare, for a long time here in the House of Representatives, was H.R. 3200, a bill that came through the Energy and Commerce Committee in a fashion that was, at least envisioned, to be a functional fashion through our Constitution and by our Founding Fathers. But it came through, and there were long, long debates in committee, but H.R. 3200, which was the product of the House, didn't make it to the floor for a vote.

What came to the floor for a vote under ObamaCare was a bill that was written in Speaker PELOSI's office of 2,600 or so pages, plus or minus 100. It depends on the font type. But 2,600 or so pages of a bill that no, not one person had an opportunity to read it all before it came to the floor for a vote. And as much as it was studied by many, there are quite a few Americans now that have read it all.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'll submit this, that it has so many convoluted contraptions within it, that there isn't a single person on the planet, no matter how intellectual they might be, no matter how much experience they might have, there's not one person that has the capability of reading the ObamaCare bill and understanding all of the activities of that bill where it references other sections of the code and you have to read it and switch back and forth, zigzag in and out of existing code and look at the ObamaCare piece of legislation and, at the same time, understand the implications to Americans. It's one thing to understand what a bill does technically, and it's another to understand how people have to live underneath that legislation. So H.R. 3200 kicked off to the side. The product of the actual committee didn't come to the floor. The product of the Speaker's office, her staff, many of them young, junior people writing up a bill that they thought was right for America, dumped down on us here to be on a short period of debate and a vote be passed by the House, and could not and would not have passed the House the day it was brought to the floor for a vote except for a couple of little promises. One of those promises was that the Senate would pass a reconciliation package, which put other pieces into it in order to avoid the filibuster rule in the Senate. So in order to get that done, they had to bring some things that couldn't get passed under the filibuster rule in the Senate, write them up in a separate bill. Well, somehow that bill couldn't have been amended to the one here on the floor because that wouldn't have passed. And furthermore, the ObamaCare bill that was written in NANCY PELOSI's office couldn't have passed here on the floor because Bart Stupak had a dozen Democrats that locked up with the Republicans and said, we aren't going to vote for a bill that funds abortion. NANCY PELOSI wrote a bill that funds abortion. HARRY REID wrote a reconciliation package that they promised to send over to the House that did the things that his Senators needed to have happen and that House Members needed to have happen, and the piece of ObamaCare that was written by NANCY PELOSI that funds abortion was going to satisfy the Stupak dozen if the President signed an Executive order that amended the legislation that was before the House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't expect every American to be completely understanding this convoluted process. In

fact, I'd expect most of them to be very confused about this. This was designed to be a confusing process. And the idea, the very idea that the President of the United States would take an oath of office to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, that everybody in this Chamber would do the same thing, and everybody in the Senate would do the same thing, and then believe somehow, all you have to do is read article I of the Constitution, and one can easily conclude that the President cannot amend a piece of legislation by signing an Executive order. He does not have the authority to do so. That is a constitutional violation.

And I have, in the very similar, if not exactly identical language that is in the Iowa Constitution, gone to court to prove exactly that when former Governor Vilsack thought that he could rewrite the code of Iowa by executive order. And the case of *King v. Vilsack* is in the books, Mr. Speaker, and the Court vacated the executive order of the Governor of the State of Iowa because he thought he could legislate by executive order. I said he couldn't. We went to court. The judge said he couldn't, and it's resolved in that issue, and the point is conceded by former Governor, now Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack.

That same tactic was used by the President of the United States, Barack Obama, when he signed an Executive order that was designed to amend the bill that was about to pass, actually he signed it after the bill passed. And the bill that passed on the condition that the President would sign an Executive order to take care of the funding for abortion and that the Senate would pass a reconciliation package that fit the other needs.

Why couldn't we do this under what we call here regular order? Why couldn't we have a committee process that would work a bill through?

Well, they did, but NANCY PELOSI dropped that one in the trash, wrote her own. Why couldn't they allow the reconciliation package, if it had any merit, to be amended on to the ObamaCare legislation, even if it's the legislation that was written in Speaker PELOSI's office, and rejected that out of committee? Why couldn't that have been an amendment that could have been voted on up or down here in the House of Representatives attached to the same piece of legislation?

Why couldn't they have put the language of Barack Obama's Executive order that supposedly says the Federal Government's not going to fund abortion. Why couldn't they have put that into the bill too and had an honest debate on an honest piece of legislation? Why not?

Well, because it wasn't. Because they could not pass it under an honest process. It had to be a legislative shenanigans process. That's what we got.

And as that bill went to final passage that night, I got a little bit of sleep that night, not much. I drafted legisla-

tion to repeal ObamaCare. Probably at the same time, me not knowing it, Congresswoman MICHELE BACHMANN of Minnesota drafted legislation to repeal ObamaCare. We each got our legislation drafts down and they came to us shortly after 9 o'clock that morning, exactly the same 40 words, within 3 minutes of each other, that said we're going to—now, I'm going to do this a little bit in summary, but only 40 words—that this Congress would repeal the act of ObamaCare. And it references the two sections that are the components by number, by bill number, and the last words of that repeal bill is as if it had never been enacted.

So we introduced that legislation, actually separately. I joined on hers and she on mine, and we went to work to get signatures to move the repeal bill. That turned into a discharge petition with 173 signatures on it, and that would be throughout the summer and into the fall of last year that we were getting signatures on the discharge petition.

And Mr. Speaker, you will know that if there's 218 signatures, a majority of the House of Representatives on a discharge petition that represents a bill, that bill bypasses committee, and the Speaker can't block it, and it comes to the floor to be voted up or down without amendment. That's what a discharge petition does.

Well, it took us a long ways down the line of a commitment to repeal ObamaCare, and it was a tool that was used by several, and I'll say many candidates for Congress who now, some of them elected to this Congress, part of the 87 freshmen Republicans, all of whom ran on the repeal of ObamaCare. And I believe, and don't know this, and I've heard no exceptions, but I believe it's also likely that all of them ran on defunding ObamaCare, cutting the funding off, because we knew that a Republican majority here in the House could pass the repeal of ObamaCare, which we did in the second week here, under H.R. 2.

□ 1550

The second highest priority for Speaker BOEHNER was the repeal of ObamaCare. H.R. 1 was funding the government; H.R. 2 was repealing ObamaCare.

That legislation passed the House with a resounding solid bipartisan vote and went over to the Senate, where every Republican in the Senate voted to repeal ObamaCare.

We committed to cutting off the funding to ObamaCare, and that's the next step. And I said, since last July at least, to cut off all the funding to ObamaCare in every appropriations bill that comes out of the House of Representatives.

Well, H.R. 1 was the single piece of legislation where we had the maximum amount of leverage. That is the funding for the duration of the year for all of the functions of government.

We learned sometime last year that there were automatic appropriations

deceptively, I believe, written into ObamaCare that are designed to create this perpetual money machine that funds the implementation of ObamaCare. Some call it mandatory spending. I do not. I call it automatic spending. There is automatic spending in ObamaCare written into it. And the number is still on my hand in Sarah Palin fashion, \$105.5 billion automatically appropriated, spent in an authorization bill completely outside of regular order of this Congress, with a handful of exceptions, in short term and few dollars. But in scope and in magnitude, no one has ever tried, no one has ever had the audacity to try to impose an automatic appropriation on this Congress that would be \$105 billion.

Some of that money goes beyond that. That is just 10 years. Some of it is appropriated, Mr. Speaker, in perpetuity; \$1 billion a year here and \$1 billion there that goes on every year that can't be stopped unless Congress goes in and shuts it off. And that is what we need to do, Mr. Speaker. We need to do this in every bill.

This continuing resolution that is before us now must include within it the language that cuts off the funding to ObamaCare, the current and the previous, the language that cuts off the automatic spending in ObamaCare.

There is \$18.6 billion for fiscal year 2010, most of it not spent yet, that implements ObamaCare, \$18.6 billion of the \$105.5 billion, and there is another \$4.95 billion in 2011 that automatically appropriates to ObamaCare. That is \$23.6 billion, Mr. Speaker, that goes in to kick ObamaCare in. It has been found unconstitutional by two Federal courts, and it has been rejected by the American people who sent 87 freshmen Republicans here to repeal ObamaCare, and we are sitting here looking at \$23.6 billion in automatic spending. We are struggling to cut the budget by \$61.5 billion. Well, let's do that. But over here is \$23.6 billion in automatic spending that goes on.

And if, as I believe, HARRY REID is committed to shutting our government down—and by the way, the majority leader in the United States Senate speaks, I think, as a proxy for the President. What does the President want here? Well, he wants to delay, or he would be telling HARRY REID to pass something. And I believe HARRY REID wants to delay and then shut down.

They have convinced me that their intention all along was to shut down this government. That is why they agreed to a short-term continuing resolution until March 4, so they could posture themselves to be in a position to force a shutdown of the government. They think that they can blame it on Republicans, and then the public will punish Republicans at the polls.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I will submit that is not the way it is and not the way it will be now, because JOHN BOEHNER and ERIC CANTOR's leadership have demonstrated clearly that this majority in

this Congress, the Speaker's office, the majority leader's office down the line have three times—H.R. 1, 2-week CR, 3-week CR—demonstrated there are the dollars for the legitimate functions of government. There are the dollars for it. We have provided it three times here, and three times the Senate hasn't moved on anything of their own initiative.

So they have convinced me that their goal all along was to shut down the government. And if I didn't believe that, all I had to do was listen to Senator SCHUMER or Howard Dean or some of the language coming out of Majority Leader REID. I am convinced that they are committed to shutting this government down.

If they do that, we need to say to them: Here are all the resources, again, and no money to implement ObamaCare.

If there is no money to implement ObamaCare but all the money that is necessary for other fiscally responsible, legitimate functions of government and they go in and shut this government down and point their fingers at us, the American people will know differently. They will understand that it always was the strategy to shut the government down by the Democrats in the Senate, and the White House, and that we are committed to keeping it open. But we cannot be allowing the funding to go forward to an unconstitutional taking of American liberty, which is ObamaCare on its face.

It is unconstitutional in four different ways: It is irresponsible; it is unsustainable; it can't be funded; and we can't find the funds to fund it all. It is \$2.6 trillion in outlays in the first 10 years.

We must, Mr. Speaker, cut off the automatic funding to ObamaCare, and any funding going forward to ObamaCare let the courts decide. And we decide here in the House of Representatives to draw a line, draw a bright line and stand firm. That all needs to happen in that way.

And history tells us this, Mr. Speaker: That when there was a government shutdown, the argument last time was over spending, most of it within either Medicare or Medicaid. If my memory serves me correctly, it was over \$300 billion in cuts. Whether it would be a plus-up or a plus-down from that, you can't take a stand on a money figure. You can't say, I'm going to stand and fight on \$300 billion. But if they lower my cuts down to \$299 billion, I'm going to be a "no." Or, if they take it up to \$301 billion, I will be happier yet. You cannot stand on a principle that is a dollar figure, because whatever you pick it is always going to be on a sliding scale. It is not a principle.

We are standing on \$61.25 billion right now. Well, if they lower those cuts down to \$61 billion, do we say "no"? I think that the Democrats on the other side understand that. That is why they have floated this number of \$33 billion in cuts. They haven't said

whether they were willing to accept it yet.

They got to \$33 billion in cuts this way: They took \$61.5 billion, divided it by two, and rounded it up to \$33 billion. That is how they arrived at the number. There isn't any question in my mind about that. And they want to be able to say, well, we met you halfway and a little more, so you should be happy that we are willing to compromise. To them, compromise is: Take the number, cut it in half, and then, if you can't get agreement, cut it in half again. And they call it compromise.

Well, I have said money itself is not a principle. You can't stand on something strongly unless you are standing on a principle. Well, a principle is an unconstitutional 2,600-page taking of American liberty, the nationalization of our skin and everything inside it called ObamaCare. That is a principle.

It is completely unsuitable for an American people that live with the liberty and freedom that God gave us, that our Founding Fathers so well articulated in the Declaration and in the Constitution, that is part of our tradition, part of our history, and part of the inspiration for the entire globe to be knocking on the door wanting to come to the United States of America. Because of what? Liberty, Mr. Speaker, listed out in the Bill of Rights: Freedom of speech, religion, and the press. Freedom to peaceably assemble, and petition the government for redress of grievances. The Second Amendment, to keep and bear arms. The right to own property. Protection from double jeopardy. To be tried by a jury of your peers. The philosophy of Federalism that devolves the powers down to the States or the people respectively. All of this and going on. Equal protection under the law and the 14th Amendment. On and on and on.

These are the inspirations for a vigorous people, a people that have a belief and a common cause and a common culture, a cultural continuity of belief in our liberty.

And they would impose us, what? Socialized medicine? A Federal taking of our right to manage our own health care? And part of that management would be to buy a health insurance policy that is driven by the marketplace that people demand and want? That would have any of the bells and whistles that the market demands and have every bell and whistle that the market demands, and should not have mandates imposed on it by the Federal Government that are imposed within the States.

People should be able to buy their own health insurance policy across State lines. The protection for the monopolies of State health insurance companies is anti-market, it is anti-free market, it is anti-freedom. And John Shadegg's bill that he pushed so hard while he was here needs to be something that goes to the President's desk, that allows people to buy insurance across State lines; so that a

young man 23 years old paying \$6,000 a year for a typical policy in New Jersey, laden with mandates, could instead go buy that typical policy in Kentucky for not \$6,000 but \$1,000. Doesn't that help our costs? Doesn't that get more people insured? Doesn't that do the right thing and protect people?

That is just one. I could take you down through a list of seven or eight or nine good solid Republican ideas, most, if not all, of which can come to this floor as standalone pieces of legislation and be sent over to the Senate, where HARRY REID would push them off his desk into the trash can. They wouldn't have the respect of going in his desk drawer.

□ 1600

Why? Because they are liberty oriented; they are free market oriented; they are constitutional; they are principled, and it gives people back their liberty.

But this country, the United States of America, this vigorous people that we are, we have a vitality that is unique. We have all of the vitality that comes from the rights that I have talked about. We have the vitality of the free enterprise system, which is the foundation of our economic system.

I would point out that there are flashcards that newly arriving immigrants, or those, I should say, that are studying for their citizenship test, mostly that is 5 years in, studying for their citizenship test, flashcards. On one side it will say, Who is the father of our country? You snap it over, it says, George Washington. Next card, Who emancipated the slaves? Snap that card over, Abraham Lincoln. Next card, What is the economic system of the United States of America? Free enterprise capitalism. That is an axiom of faith of the American people, that we are free to spend our money as we choose.

ObamaCare commandeers our paycheck, Mr. Speaker. It takes it over. And they say you must buy this health insurance policy that is approved or produced by the Federal Government, and if you don't do that, we are going to send the IRS in to punish you, to fine you. It is a punishment if you don't buy it.

If they can pass a law that requires you to buy a product that is produced or approved by the Federal Government, if they can commandeer 5 percent or 10 percent, or in many cases 25 or 40 or even 50 percent of your payroll to pay for a health insurance premium, if they can commandeer any part of your earnings and force you to buy something, the next step is they can commandeer your money to buy a General Motors car because their investment may not be doing so well, or a Chrysler. Or maybe you could buy some shares of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. They took that over, too, didn't they? Maybe they can force you to invest in the student loan program. They took that over, too, didn't they? They

could force you to buy a certain kind of washing machine, a certain kind of shoes. And they can also force you, at that point, you have to buy so much diet pop instead of non-diet pop, so many ratios of carrots versus candy bars.

If they can commandeer 1 percent of your paycheck and force you to buy a product, they can commandeer 100 percent of your paycheck and force you to buy all products, to the point where you are enslaved by the Federal Government. How can that be constitutional for a free people?

Mr. Speaker, I will submit it is not and it cannot be, and that is why this House voted resoundingly to repeal ObamaCare. That is why every Republican here and in the Senate voted to repeal ObamaCare. That is why we must cut off all funding to implement or enforce ObamaCare in every appropriations bill, and that is why they deceptively plugged into ObamaCare the automatic appropriations of \$105.5 billion, and that is why they front-loaded it with \$18.6 billion in the FY 2010 budget to intensively implement ObamaCare, and that is why there is another \$4.59 billion in this fiscal year. There is \$23.6 billion sitting there in the pot.

And think of this, Mr. Speaker. If they are successful in forcing a shutdown of this government, and while they are busily trying to point their fingers at those of us who provide the resources to keep it open, we would still see \$23.6 billion hard at work implementing ObamaCare. The lights could go off in Federal offices all over America because of a shutdown, but you could drive down and look at where the lights are on. Guess what? That is the \$23.6 billion still there, still implementing ObamaCare, like Santa's little elves, making sure we have socialized medicine before the lights come back on.

That is what we are faced with, Mr. Speaker. That is where we must draw a line. We must stand and do this fight. The fight is inevitable. So choose the ground when the army is the strongest and on the ground that we can stand and fight on, and that is this: Provide the resources for the legitimate functions of this government, not for the illegitimate functions of this government. And if the President of the United States working through his mouthpiece, HARRY REID, or directly brings about a shutdown, it will be about a bright line between all of the legitimate functions of government versus perhaps a legislative tantrum, an act of audacity and narcissism that his signature piece of legislation called ObamaCare means more to the President of the United States than all of the functions of government put together, Mr. Speaker.

For all those reasons, I say, this is the week to draw the line. This is the week to do the fight. This is the week to do the battle. We have to have it. We can't avoid it. Let's get it over with so

we can get on with the legitimate functions of the United States Government.

TRIBUTE TO GERALDINE FERRARO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a good friend and a former colleague who passed away this past week, a true trailblazer, former Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro. She is one of the few people in history who can lay claim to being a first. She was the first woman to be nominated for Vice President on a major ticket and also the first Italian American to achieve that honor. She was a leader, an advocate, a devoted public servant and beloved family member. I am also honored, most of all, to have been able to call her a friend.

The history that has unfolded after she stood on the stage in San Francisco in 1984 to accept her party's nomination for Vice President has happened thanks to her taking those first steps. I remember being there at the convention in San Francisco in 1984 and how proud we were that one of our own, a New Yorker, Gerry Ferraro, was being nominated as Vice President. At the same time, our Governor at the time, another New Yorker, Mario Cuomo, gave the keynote address at that convention.

Since that time, of course, another woman has appeared on the ballot of a major party for Vice President and another came within a handful of delegates of becoming the first Presidential nominee. Strong women in politics and business are not the exception any longer; they are mainstream. As Gerry declared in San Francisco, "I stand before you to proclaim tonight: America is the land where dreams can come true for all of us."

Gerry grew up, as I did, in New York City and went into teaching before going to law school, as I did, and grew up in the South Bronx as a young person, as I did as well. She headed the new Special Victims Bureau of the Queens County District Attorney's Office and was a Queens criminal prosecutor before being elected to the House of Representatives in 1978.

While serving in the House, she created a flex-time program for public employees which has become the basis of such programs in the private sector. She also successfully sponsored the Women's Economic Equality Act, which ended pension discrimination against women, provided job options for displaced homemakers, and enabled homemakers to open IRAs.

When I think of Gerry Ferraro, I think of her as a typical representative of the middle class in New York's outer boroughs. She had a certain kind of combination of street smarts and book smarts and a certain kind of sense and moxie, knowing how to get ahead and what to say.